



THE CENTENNIAL HISTORY 1862-1962

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CHAPTER II

1872-1912

With the typical Chicago "I Will" spirit, Dania began rebuilding after the calamitous fire. Fritz Frantzen was elected president; George Hoffman, vice president; C. Hansen, treasurer; and C. Larsen, secretary. A new development program was embarked on, and plans were laid for replacing the property lost in the fire. The membership increased considerably, this being due to the influx of Danish immigrants after Denmark's unfortunate war in 1864. That Dania was able to prosper during this period was rather remarkable in view of the economic depression (the Panic of 1873, to be specific) which swept the country and deeply affected Chicago. The melting pot exploded in Chicago in the 1870's. Unemployment, poverty, riots, bomb-happy anarchists, and suspicion and jealousies between the different immigrant groups, all combined to make the 1870's one of Chicago's most tempestuous decades. Yet Dania and its members weathered the storms. The Dania members apparently weren't too financially embarrassed because they sent money back to the Danish veterans of the wars of 1864 and 1870-71, and also to the Danes in South Jutland who had been rendered homeless by a cataclysmic flood in 1872.

One of the centers of both Danish and American culture was the home in Rogers Park of Morris Salmonsens. Salmonsens's book, "Brogede Minder fra Fyrretyve Aars Ophold i Chicago" ("A Variety of Memories from Forty Years in Chicago"- 1912), has been one of the main sources for much which has been written here of Dania's Centennial History. Salmonsens was a highly educated man of rare talents. He was married to the sister of Professor Johan Ludvig Heiberg of the University of Copenhagen, and was a brother of the Salmonsens whose name is perpetuated in "Salmonsens's Konversations Leksikon".

There appeared in Denmark, in 1872, the first edition of Vilhelm Topsoe's "Fra Amerika" ("From America"), & an extensive description of the political and social conditions in the United States, based on impressions received during the author's visit here. Morris Salmonsens was intrigued by the author's names for Chicago; "The Garden City", and "Queen of Lake Michigan". This may possibly have induced Salmonsens to head for Chicago when he and his wife left Denmark after the War of 1870-71

In the fall of 1872 the Salmonsens, together with Henry Hertz, arrived in Chicago. Salmonsens couldn't have been overly impressed by what he saw of the "Garden City" as it was only a year after the disastrous fire, and Chicago greeted him with temperatures that were soaring close to 100F. Walking down the streets, however, he discovered a sign which lifted his spirits: it read, "Christian Hansen's Hotel". The rooms were all taken but at least Salmonsens began to feel at home in Chicago. Christian Hansen later had a hotel called "Dannevirke" and Hansen himself became known as "Dannevirke-Hansen". Mrs. Hansen, a kind, pug-nosed woman, was a most competent cook, and her mock turtle soup was always a favorite with Salmonsens.

One of Salmonsens first walks in Chicago was to Consul Emil Dreier's drugstore. In his own book Salmonsens gives a vivid description of his visit to the consulate. He was deeply impressed by the sight of Dreier in a top hat; it was the first top hat he had seen in America, and what's more, it graced the head of a confessed atheist!

In November of 1872, Salmonsens received an invitation to visit Dania, which with 400 members was the only Danish society of any consequence in Chicago. Dania was then located in an unattractive brick building on Milwaukee Ave. Salmonsens ascended the steep stairway and entered the large club room where a business meeting was in progress. President John Klug sat on a low platform with the recording secretary at his right. After the meeting, Salmonsens was introduced to John Klug, Valdemar Lund, known as "Langelund", Neils Uhrenholdt, and many others of those present.

When the famous Sarah Bernhardt came to perform in Chicago there was no one among the city officials and dignitaries who could welcome her in her native French except Morris Salmonsens, -an honor that placed him in the foreground of the literary and journalistic men of his time.

In 1882 Salmonsens acquired a position with Chicago's Marriage License Bureau. Here he made full use of his linguistic abilities because he came in contact with all kinds of people who could not yet speak English. In the following years he helped to tie more than one half million marriage knots, always ending the ceremony with a hearty: "God bless you, my children!" Salmonsens's observations as a marriage license clerk are recorded in a humorous little book called, "At the Marriage License Window", a most worthwhile contribution to Chicago's literary history as is, of course, his "A Variety of Memories from Forty Years in Chicago". In the American press can be found many enlightening articles on Danish art, literature, and drama, which were written by Salmonsens. He also ghostwrote many of Dr. Max Henius's speeches.

Salmonsens was a director of Dania for many years and was made an honorary member on December 5, 1891. He undoubtedly was behind Dania's efforts in April of 1892 to obtain a chair for Georg Brandes at the University of Chicago. He passed away in 1912.

Miss Ella Maud Salmonsens, his daughter, has been connected with the Medical Department of the John Crerar Library since 1928, the year Dr. J. Chr. Bay became chief librarian. Thus the name Salmonsens is still connected with Chicago's intellectual life.

One of the most gifted men in the Danish colony at that time was Volkmar Johnsen, a true bohemian who was always gay even when penniless. He spoke both Danish and English extremely well, and wrote both poetry and prose. Johnsen was so well posted that he came close to obtaining a secretarial position at the Office of the American Minister in Copenhagen, but politics intervened and he never got the job. Johnsen then opened a musical instrument store on Milwaukee Ave. and even started writing musical textbooks although he was not a trained musician. These books met

with such success that he was able to take a trip back to Denmark and even purchase some paintings at the auction of Bishop Engelstoff's estate.

In the fall of 1874 the newspaper "Heimdal" began publication. It was intended as an independent and liberal paper with weekly news summaries. The first sample issue was made up by Henry L. Hertz, who together with Morris Salmonsens had arrived in the fall of 1872 on Baltische Lloyd's new steamer. Hertz, having not as yet started on his political career, acted as an advertising agent for "Heimdal" and procured the necessary ads to cover the cost of the paper and printing. This specimen issue of "Heimdal" got into the hands of a young Danish man by the name of Olaf Riechel, who in 1885 became president of Dania.

Olaf Riechel was born in Copenhagen, the son of a shoemaker: he must have lost his parents early because he received his education at the Royal Orphan Home in Copenhagen. Riechel immigrated as a young man to America, but out of sympathy with France he enlisted in the Foreign Legion, was wounded and decorated, and then returned again to this country. Riechel had much praise for the first issue of "Heimdal" and informed Hertz that he had the means to start publishing it on a regular basis. Riechel then became owner and co-editor, and insisted that the paper be printed with Latin instead of Gothic type. At the same time, however, Riechel kept an office job and was too exhausted in the evenings to spend any time on "Heimdal". He also admitted that he was no journalist, and consequently he seldom wrote for the paper. Riechel's private funds were soon depleted and in order to survive he formed a stock company of which Emil Dreier was the head for a short time. A smaller publishing office was rented and Gothic type was put back into use again. "Heimdal" was at this time a four page paper with about 4000 subscribers.

Riechel sold "Heimdal" to William Harlev, as mentioned earlier, later bought it back from Harlev and sold it to Fritz Frantzen, a book dealer. After selling out to Frantzen, Riechel tried to get into politics on the Democratic slate for a minor office, but he was not successful. One morning the newspapers reported that Olaf Riechel had been killed by a train: his friends, however, adjudged him a suicide.

Fritz Frantzen, the new owner of "Heimdal", was a veteran Danish officer who had partaken in the last courageous stand of the small Danish army at Dybbol in 1864. Frantzen hired as his editor for "Heimdal" a Professor N. C. Frederiksen who had just recently arrived from Denmark. Not too long afterwards both "Heimdal" and Frantzen's bookstore were purchased by Professor Frederiksen, but on such unfavorable terms for Frantzen that he was forced into bankruptcy. The Danish Book trade Association was one of the creditors but lost nothing because Frantzen later settled his account in full with them. Frantzen's financial failure was very likely the reason why he didn't receive the desired post of Danish Consul in Chicago.

Frantzen was elected president of Dania in 1871, 1882, and again in 1920. As an elderly man the stately Frantzen attended the Danish Trinity Lutheran Church where he always sat in the third pew directly beneath the pulpit. On April 19, 1921 Frantzen died suddenly in Dania while attending an Activities Committee meeting.

As the next owner of "Heimdal", Professor Frederiksen changed its political color: he wanted it to be a Democratic paper because he felt that the Democrats were for free trade. Frederiksen was a gifted man of many interests, always enthusiastic about new business ventures, but not keen about the dull but necessary details involved in running a newspaper. When "Heimdal" finally went out of existence Frederiksen started a semi-literary paper in English but that also was a failure. Full of big ideas, he established a real estate company which was supported by a financially sound railroad company. A large office was opened in Chicago, but with many employees who were not trained in business, namely: Clemens Petersen, the literary critic; Louis Pio; Poul Geleff. Witty Danes called this office, "Frederiksen's Hospital", which was a pun on the old Frederiks Hospital in Copenhagen. Frederiksen himself was constantly on the road, eating in cheap restaurants and sleeping in railroad cars.

Nevertheless, he still dreamt of a fabulous career in politics and even thought he had a chance to get into the United States Senate! He finally lost his credit and all his dreams went up in smoke. Bankrupt, he left this country, went to Paris to write for some French newspapers, and finally ended up in Denmark. Here he wrote a book about Finland, caught pneumonia and died in 1905.

In 1875 Dania had 150 dues-paying members and over \$1200.00 in the bank. One successful social affair followed another, and Dania was the social club, membership in which was highly esteemed by all the Chicago Danes. Other societies were anxious to merge with Dania, but Dania wanted to remain independent and refused to affiliate with any other group.

The meetings during this period were held at several different locations: Kinzie and Desplaines Avenues; 17, 312, and 345 Milwaukee Avenue. The library was replenished, the members were eager to play an active role, and, in short, there was a pulsating and vibrant life in Dania during those years.

There were others than Markus Thrane who found religious and political asylum in Dania. In 1877 Louis Pio and Paul Geleff, two of Denmark's first Social Democratic leaders, were bribed by the Danish police to leave their country after having served several years in prison. They came to Chicago and joined the Round Table clique where they met A. William Hansen (known as "Black" Hansen because of his luxurious growth of black hair, side whiskers, and mustache). This threesome, together with a Harald Brix, went out to Kansas where they founded a socialistic colony. Their efforts to promote socialism among the Kansans failed, however, and they returned, without any money, to Chicago. Louis Pio was a resourceful man, however, and he soon earned some money by publishing a Danish cookbook and a Scandinavian-English dictionary and guide for young people. It was rumored that Pio had received a large sum of money from estate owners and wealthy men in Denmark as an inducement to leave that country. A heated controversy arose between Pio and Geleff as to the division of this payoff; Pio was accused of taking more than his fair share. Geleff published a pamphlet entitled, "The Pure, Undiluted Truth", which was a defamatory attack on Pio's character. Pio weathered the storm well, however, which was probably due in part to his many friends who stood by him, especially William Har1ev who got him a job with the City as a draftsman. Later when times got bad, Pio's energetic wife did her share by giving piano lessons. At the turn of the century Pio became a real estate agent for a pioneer

colony in Florida which consisted mostly of Scandinavians. Just as he had gotten a promising start in this new venture he contracted pneumonia in 1904 and died. It is of interest to note that on December 16, 1915, Mrs. Pio lectured in Dania, and that James P. Pio, evidently a son, was a member of Dania and passed away on December 1, 1955.

William "Black" Hansen, who was just mentioned, came from the ranks of the proletariat in Denmark. He was a typical Copenhagen workman with a journeyman's gait and manners. He was employed for a while in Bing & Grondal's warehouse where, being reliable and careful, he broke but few dishes. When Hansen came to America and met up with Louis Pio, the latter made him his secretary in spite of the fact that Hansen had much difficulty in writing Danish correctly. When his command of the language improved he sent newsy postcards to Henrik Cavling, the editor of "Politiken" in Copenhagen, and to Sophus Neble, owner of "The Danish Pioneer", in Omaha, Nebraska. Neble later became Hansen's son-in-law.

After the misadventure with the socialistic colony in Kansas, "Black" Hansen became an agent for Frederiksen's bookstores in various Danish settlements, but he had to give this up due to the lack of books. Hansen, a gifted man, had an excellent memory and could recite both Hippolyte Taine and Georg Brandes; he also was very much interested in the works of Dostoevsky, especially "Crime and Punishment".

Hansen was an effective and scintillating, if not fluent, speaker. At one particular banquet, when the Danish Minister was present, Hansen spoke of the admirable Danish immigrants who were not to be found in Chicago but out in the farming communities. Hansen's speech so impressed the Danish Minister that he arose and walked over and shook Hansen's hand. Being a sparkling conversationalist, Hansen intrigued both Consul Emil Dreier and the famous Danish poet, Holger Drachmann, who loved to chat with Hansen over a bottle of Burgundy when he was visiting Chicago.

To achieve success as a Danish writer among Danish immigrants seems to have been rather difficult. Writers and journalists within a small ethnic group, as the immigrant Danes were, have always had economically hard times, and one of their main problems was just to exist and stave off starvation. This was the case with one of Dania's earlier members, Valdemar Borchsenius.

Born in Jutland, Borchsenius graduated from the University of Copenhagen, where he passed the difficult examen philologicum which was necessary for becoming an instructor in the classical languages at the Latin schools. Borchsenius came to America but immediately had difficulty eking out a living. He began as a grocery clerk in his brother's store in Wisconsin, and then came to Chicago where he tried to make use of his fine education by teaching languages, translating, and writing articles on literature and science for the local Scandinavian press. He supposedly also gave instructions in the necessary Latin terms to women training to be midwives. For a while Borchsenius made translations for a German printer and proofread a small German Lutheran weekly, but for all his work he was poorly paid. To add to his dilemma, he was in poor health and could not take on any physical work.

In spite of all his troubles, Borchsenius found enough strength and inspiration to write a book of poetry, "Fra Oresund til Mississippi" ("From the Sound to the Mississippi"). In his critical articles, Borchsenius often attacked Professor Rasmus B. Anderson, Professor in Scandinavian languages and literature at the University of Wisconsin, whom he accused of plagiarism in his works on Norse mythology and history. Borchsenius charged that Anderson had taken a good deal of his material from the writings of the great Danish philologist and translator of Icelandic sagas, Professor Niels Matthias Petersen.

Borchsenius remained a bachelor throughout his life; as an elderly man he became engaged to a former milliner on Milwaukee Avenue but this romance didn't end in marriage. He lived out his twilight years in two small rooms which contained nothing but his long tobacco pipes and undisturbed dust. His friends finally obtained permission for him to enter the Danish Old People's Home, but he passed away in 1903 before he could move out to Norwood Park.

An equally hard fate was meted out to another of Dania's old members and a frequent guest at the "Round Table", Clemens (Klemmen) Petersen, the literary critic. Born the son of an Od County farmer in 1834, Petersen received his Master of Arts degree in 1857, wrote critiques and articles for "Faedrelandet" ("The Fatherland"), and in 1860 published a collection of theatrical criticisms called "Dramaturgical Criticism".

To Petersen the historical and national meant nothing, only the personal and actual had any validity. In his critiques on literary works he always stressed the spirit of the work and not the talent or genius of the author. Petersen was influenced in his thinking by Johan Ludvig Heiberg, Soren Kirkegaard, and the ethics of Hans Egede Schack. "The Fantasts", written by Schack, especially influenced him.

Petersen always suffered from the incongruity between his idealistic and real existence. He was unfortunately rather effeminate, and his literary style was affected and frequently overly dramatic. In 1868 he published a book about the poet, Oehlenschlaeger, the leading thought of which was that Fear is the source of poetry. He was a teacher in the Copenhagen public schools but in 1868 was forced to leave his post and he came to America. Here he existed as a journalist, as an editor for "The Nave", a trade publication for wagon-makers, and as a Nordic contributor to periodicals and encyclopedias. His literary articles, written both in New York, where he wrote for "Nordlyset" ("Northern Lights"), and in Chicago, gave him only a very meager income.

Petersen was a most talented, but most unhappy man, and he sought and led a very solitary and reclusive life in Chicago. Many wanted to help him; Bjornstjerne Bjornson, whose interest lay in sick and wounded souls, visited with Petersen whenever his travels brought him to Chicago, and even tried in vain to get Petersen to return with him to Norway. Petersen eventually became senile, and his friends made him return to Denmark where in 1918 he died, friendless.

Another society within the Danish colony, "The Danish Veterans' Society", was founded in 1876, and many Dania members were active in it. This group was composed of veterans from the wars with the German states in 1848-50, and the Austrian-Prussian

War of 1864. These Danish veterans were a parade-loving group, and whenever the opportunity presented itself they marched down Chicago's streets with their band and banners. For a while the growth of Dania was actually hampered by this new society. Those veterans who had drifted from Dania over to the Veterans' Society eventually returned to Dania mainly because of its library and Niels Uhrenholdt's bar.

The leader of "The Danish Veterans' Society", Major Alstrup, was one of Dania's most colorful members and its president in 1884. Born in Norway, Alstrup was a veteran of either the 1848 wars or the Prussian-Austrian War. How he acquired the title of Major is uncertain. Alstrup, a well groomed man with white hair and whiskers, was very Danish, and like so many of his countrymen, loved to give speeches. He was generally one of the main speakers at the various national festivals, and in his addresses he never failed to mention the Danish constitution and Frederik VII.

Major Alstrup loved parades. On these occasions his horse would wear small Danish flags behind its ears and have ribbons of Danish colors entwined in its tail. Alstrup would inspect his regiment of veterans, all of whom were proudly wearing their service metals, wave to his family who were at the window above his distillery, signal his band to begin, and off he'd go.

Alstrup's distillery was located in a building which formerly had housed the newspaper, "Heimdal". He specialized in liqueurs and knew the formula for a strong Swedish punch. It was supposedly from Alstrup's distillery that Hoffman-Schmidt, Gustav Mueller, and a Norwegian by the name of Schoyen, sent the following message to Emperor Napoleon III at the declaration of war between France and Germany in 1870: "Scandinavians in Chicago, gathered at a mass meeting, send greetings to the Emperor of France, with wishes for success and good luck for the Army of France". There is some question as to the correct location from where this message was sent. The present poeta laureatus of the Danish colony, Anton Kvist, states in his history of Dania that the message was sent from Dania, not from Alstrup's distillery.

The hope of getting Slesvig back into the Danish Kingdom had been fervently kept alive among the Chicago Danes, many of whom were from that territory which was lost in the Prussian-Austrian War of 1864. When Bismark, in 1878, deleted paragraph five from the Treaty of Prague, inserted there by Napoleon III, which said in effect that North Slesvig should be reunited with Denmark if the majority of its population by free vote should so desire, -this deletion crumbled the hope of the South Jutlanders. Speeches for the Slesvig cause ceased, and the disappointment was keen to the many Slesvig patriots such as Peter Noer.

Peter Noer, a Dania member until January 9, 1909, was an inspired spokesman for both the South Jutlanders and the Danish language. He was an extremely kind man, and a liberal contributor to all the Danish causes: he was said to always have had a Danish flag pinned on the inside of his shirt. Noer probably agreed wholeheartedly with Soren Kierkegaard: "I am happy to be bound to my mother tongue, tied as only few are, tied as Adam was to Eve because there was no other woman, tied because it has been impossible for me to learn any other language, and thereby impossible for me to be

tempted to be arrogant and superior to my native tongue". Needless to say, many of the Dania members were of the same opinion.

Another important Danish politician was Niels Juul. Born in Jutland, he came to America as a young man. Like so many immigrants, Juul tried his hand at several occupations before going into politics; although a painter by trade, he became a publisher, a partner in a tailoring business, and was even active in a coal mining company.

Juul began his political career as treasurer in one of Chicago's municipal offices. He studied law in his spare time and succeeded in becoming a member of the Illinois Senate, -a noteworthy achievement for a son of Jutland. He introduced a real estate law, sponsored by the Chicago Real Estate Board, which bears his name. In 1912, Juul was put up as the Republican candidate for Congress and was elected. Congressman Juul was one of the speakers at the 12th Danish National Committee festival in 1920, held to celebrate the reunion of South Jutland with the rest of Denmark.

Juul was unquestionably a gifted man. He was a witty speaker, so clever and humorous that the Danish poet, Holger Drachmann, called Juul one of the wittiest after dinner speakers he had ever met. Juul was also the moving spirit behind the many song festivals that took place during the year of the World's Columbian Exposition. He undoubtedly was active in Dania's chorus as well as in "Harmonien".

Very little can be uncovered about Niels Juul from 1900 to his death in 1930. It was reported in September of '29 that he was in the Norwegian-American Hospital, and that he owed Dania money. His wife then informed the Society that her husband was non compos mentis, and that a guardian had been appointed to take care of his finances. At Dania's meeting on December 11, 1929, the secretary noted in his minutes that "he (Juul) can be assumed to be dead". His widow requested the death benefits from Dania's Sick Benefit Association, and these were paid her, minus Juul's unpaid dues. At the January 8, 1930 meeting, Dania's president mentioned Niels Juul's passing, but the members paid no special tribute to their politically successful late member.

Niels Juul, Jr. was also a member of Dania: he was also slow in paying his dues. In arrears, he was dropped from membership in 1928, but evidently was readmitted for his death was announced at Dania on October 14, 1955.

Public offices and political positions of importance were not common among the early Danes in Chicago. With the exception of George P. Hansen and Niels Juul, who have been mentioned, the Danes seemed to lack the real knack and aptness for politics. This is generally true even at the present time. The Dane that stepped up the farthest on the political ladder was unquestionably Henry L. Hertz

In 1872 Hertz immigrated to America together with Morris Salmonsens. He was associated for a while with the newspaper, "Heimdal", as previously mentioned. He then entered the political arena and became Coroner in Cook County, and then rose to Secretary of Treasurer for the State of Illinois. Hertz ended his career of public service as an Internal Revenue Agent.

Hertz was President of Dania in 1880-81, and was a man of great influence in the Society. At this same time he was the undisputed political boss in large sections of Chicago. Hertz will be remembered for always wearing a red tie, -the sartorial symbol of Liberalism. When the "Joint Committee of the Danish Organizations", later called the Danish National Committee, held their national festival in 1909 in Riverview Park, Henry Hertz was the toastmaster, and gave an address entitled: "What is a Danish-American".

Some records indicate that Hertz turned Roman Catholic, but on his deathbed, on July 3, 1926, he did not ask for a priest but for a Danish minister. At the November meeting in 1927, an enlarged photograph of Henry L.Hertz was hung in Dania and unveiled at the 65th anniversary party. There were some members, however, who thought that there were other more deserving Dania personages who should have had that honor.

Dania celebrated Henry L.Hertz's 75th birthday with a banquet in his honor. Anton Kvist commented: "Only a few among Chicago's Danes have ever been paid so much honor, in such a grand style, so warmly and genuinely as has Henry L.Hertz on this occasion."

Henry Ockenholdt joined Dania sometime during the early 1880's, and became president in 1887-88, as well as in 1902-03. Ockenholdt was a handsome, dignified man, -a true-blue Dane, who was respected by everyone who came in contact with him. He and his charming wife, Bertha, made a very attractive couple, and their home, like Morris Salmonsens', was a center of culture and social activities. Both Ockenholdts evidently came from the upper-class in Denmark, but here in America Henry Ockenholdt lost none of his dignity and nobleness because he was forced to clean and repair rugs for a livelihood.

Ockenholdt was determined that Dania should have new quarters. At a meeting in January of 1890, he proposed that Dania build its own home. In August of 1891, he informed the members that there was a building at 251 Milwaukee Avenue which could be had for \$12,000.00 with \$3,000.00 down: no action was taken on this. Ockenholdt didn't give up. On October 7, 1911, he suggested a special meeting to discuss plans for Dania's future home. At the next meeting, President Peter Kristensen recommended the purchase of the property on Kedzie Avenue near Wabansia which could be had for \$4,000.00. The acquisition of this land was supported by Christian Nielsen, James Heyn, Martin Houlberg, Valdemar Bauer, C. H. C. Nielsen and Charles Wilde. The purchase deal went through for \$3,500.00, and Dania finally had a new location. When the construction of the new building started in 1912, the man who had the honor of turning up the first spadeful of dirt was Henry Ockenholdt.

On August 21, 1912, Henry Ockenholdt announced that he had begun writing the history of Dania. Fritz Frantzen, speaking for Dania, offered to assist Ockenholdt financially in this project but Ockenholdt insisted on bearing the whole expense himself. In May of 1913 Ockenholdt passed away, but oddly enough there is no mention of this outstanding Dania member in the Records (Rasmus Egeberg was the Recording Secretary) and one wonders whether the usual tribute given a deceased member was

purposely omitted due to some personal animosities. Dania did pay for Ockenholdt's funeral expenses and did take care of his unpaid bills in connection with the History he was writing.

Mrs. Bertha Ockenholdt, as a widow, remained active in the Danish Trinity Lutheran Church which she had been a member of for fifty years. She died in 1930 at the age of seventy-five, as a result of severe burns received from an explosion of melted paraffin wax in her home. She was honored by the King of Denmark with the "Royal Medal of Reward in gold".

On September 5, 1891, Dania's Building Committee recommended the purchase of a building at 249-251 West Chicago Avenue for \$23,000.00. The initial down payment was \$3,000.00. and \$2,000.00 was to be paid within the following four years. In October Dania borrowed \$15,000.00 to enable it to close this deal.

The steward chosen for the West Chicago Avenue quarters was Ludwig Hoffenblad, who had joined Dania on December 19, 1889. Hoffenblad later (1913) became Dania's treasurer, and on his 75th birthday, in 1915, he was made an honorary member of Dania.

Ludwig Hoffenblad was made Dania's librarian in 1922, and served in that capacity until his death in 1925. As curator of the books, Hoffenblad was rather skeptical of the library's value to the members. In 1922, when 1477 books were in the library, but not being read, Hoffenblad suggested that since the popularity of the automobile had all but eliminated the reading of books, Dania's library should be discontinued. Charles Wilde vigorously opposed this, and suggested as an alternate solution that new and better books be purchased, thereby perhaps rekindling the reading habits of the members.

Hoffenblad celebrated -his 83rd birthday in 1923, and two years later, on August 9, 1925, he passed away and was buried from Dania.

Several men who became outstanding and prominent members of Dania joined the Society between the years 1888 and 1892. Charles Ryberg and Peder Kristensen were added to the membership list in 1888, Charles Wilde in 1889, Rasmus Egebergh in 1891, and Max Henius in 1892.

It is a Danish characteristic to be outspoken and to claim the individual's inalienable right to speak out and, if necessary, dissent. Dania's history is fraught with episodes where the members displayed this Danish trait. One such dissenter was Charles Ryberg. Born in Copenhagen in 1859, Ryberg came to Chicago in the early 1880's and became a Dania member on March 15, 1888. He was in and out of Dania at least twice, and was president for six terms in 1905-1907.

Ryberg was active in politics, and was for some time a member of the State Legislature. He supported Theodore Roosevelt and his "Bull Moose Party", and was even photographed with Roosevelt when the latter was campaigning in Chicago in 1912. When Roosevelt, as the Progressive party candidate, lost to Woodrow Wilson in

that same year, Charles Ryberg also lost, and he consequently left politics to devote his full time and energy to his Danish interests.

Ryberg became one of Dania's most active members. When he was elected, in 1908, to the Danish-American Society as the delegate from Dania, however, he was not considered eligible due to the fact that Ludwig Hoffenblad was still the Dania delegate and refused to resign in favor of Ryberg. Hoffenblad belonged to the powerful Henry Hertz coterie, and Ryberg did not. In the February 28, 1908 issue of "Revyen" ("The Review"), Ryberg wrote a scorching article entitled: "Danish-American Society-Henry L.Hertz and His Lieutenants in Dania". Ryberg apparently touched on a sensitive spot, - Dania's internal power politics. He was given the choice of either apologizing or being suspended for three months. His love for Dania outweighed his dissenting spirit and he chose the apology alternative. His love for everything Danish remained with him until his death on May 24, 1927.

The peak of the influx of immigrants from Germany and the Scandinavian countries was reached in the 1880's and 1890's. Many of these Danish immigrants came to Chicago and became members of Dania. One of these men who joined was destined to become one of Dania's most outstanding and devoted members. This man was Charles L. Wilde.

Charles L. Wilde's name was entered on Dania's membership list on March 2, 1889. He became Dania's president in June of 1903, was made an honorary member on January 16, 1935, and passed away on August 24, 1938. Wilde was extremely active not only in Dania, but in the Danish Aid Society (whose bylaws he wrote), the Old Settlers Society (which he founded), and the Danish National Committee (where he served as Dania's first delegate).

Charles L. Wilde was the author of "Memorable Recollections of Dania: 1885-1935". This history was based on Dania's official records and was apparently difficult to write, for Wilde complained at a meeting in 1934 that he had tried in vain to locate certain necessary source material. Wilde's history is essentially a relation of events in Dania presented in a strict chronological order. As such it lacks the flowing poetic style of an Anton Kvist, yet it clearly reveals Wilde's deep affection for Dania. At a meeting in 1935, Wilde informed Dania that the Copenhagen publishing firm, Gyldendal, was not interested in publishing his Dania chronicle.

When the Danish poet, Holger Drachmann, passed away, Charles Wilde spearheaded the drive to purchase, as a gift from Chicago's Danes, a silver wreath which was to be placed on the poet's coffin in the crypt at Skagen, Denmark.

When not busy with his many Danish interests, Wilde served as secretary of the bricklayers' union in Chicago and held an administrative post with the Sanitary District. Wilde was a Republican and one of the founders of the Danish-American Republican League. His outstanding work during World War I, and his founding of Dania's Homeguards, will be touched on later.

When Dr. Max Henius became a Dania member in 1892, a man was added to Dania's roster who was destined to become one of the most eminent and celebrated Danish immigrants. Henius's notable contributions as an immigrant were not only his achievements in Chicago in the brewing industry, the water pollution problem and with the Public Library, but also his successful efforts in creating a tangible bond between America and Denmark, as evidenced by the Rebild National Park.

Max Henius was born in Aalborg in 1859, the youngest of Isidore and Emilie Henius's seven children. The language in his home was mostly German since his parents, of Polish-Jewish origin, had originally come from Northern Germany. Henius spent four years in the Aalborg Cathedral School, then went to the Polytechnic Institute in Hanover, Germany, where he met a Mr. Wahl from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, a man who later became Henius's business associate. Henius then matriculated at Marburg University where he obtained a doctor's degree. After marrying the daughter of Dr. Emil Heiberg, who strongly objected to this union, Henius left Denmark in 1881 and came to Chicago.

Five years after his arrival in Chicago, Henius and Wahl opened their chemical laboratory where they analyzed the supplies and products used in the brewing and distilling industries. They advocated the use of pure yeasts, as taught by the famous Emil Christian Hansen of the Carlsberg Laboratories in Copenhagen. The two chemists published a monthly magazine, "Der Braumeister", and for this reason it is no wonder that the Germans considered Henius one of their own. He was made president of a German press club, and was the main speaker at the unveiling of a statue of Fritz Reuter, the famous Plattdeutsch humorist.

In 1891, the Wahl-Henius Academy of Brewing was quartered on South Water Street, and in 1901 it was moved to Fullerton Avenue where it became the Wahl-Henius Institute of Brewing. The same year saw the publication of the much used, "American Handy Book of Brewing, Malting and Auxiliary Trades". Several years later, Henius got the idea of having the Secretary of Agriculture, James Wilson, as honorary president of the Brewers Congress. Henius personally went to see President Taft in Washington D.C. and secured his approval. As Henius left the interview, the President called after him: "Goodbye, Gambrinus". (Gambrinus was the mythical Flemish king who supposedly was the inventor of beer).

According to Professor S. P. Sorensen of the Carlsberg Laboratories, Henius's greatest achievement was his successful fight against water pollution and typhoid in Chicago, and his relentless crusade for pure milk in this city. Henius publicly declared that Chicago's milk dealers were poisoning the milk by using the contaminated Lake Michigan water. It was a day of great personal satisfaction when Dr. Henius, in 1900, saw the flotsam and debris in the Chicago River suddenly flow backwards.

The Mayor of Chicago appointed Dr. Henius to the Board of Directors of the Chicago Public Library in 1911. Henius became chairman in 1916, and served the Chicago library system intermittently for seventeen years. Many excellent innovations in the library system were introduced by Henius, but he didn't always work in complete harmony with the City Hall.

Dr. Max Henius has undoubtedly done more than anyone else to cement the ties between America and Denmark. His ceaseless efforts brought about the establishment of Rebild National Park and the annual celebration there of America's Independence Day. To many, Rebild was the crowning point of Henius's career. The Rebild saga, an interesting story in itself, will be mentioned later.

One of Dania's more contentious members was Valdemar Lund, who usually went by the moniker, "Langelund" (Long Lund). A handsome giant of a man, Lund was born in Nyboder in Copenhagen. Lund was a carpenter in the royal dockyards before traveling as a "naver" (from the abbreviation, "nav", of "Scandinav") in Germany and other countries. After a journey to Athens, Greece, he came to Chicago and joined Dania.

Lund belonged to the "opposition party" in Dania, especially when it came to questions relating to the Society's financial means and the building fund. Another object of his intense dislike was King Christian IX of Denmark, whom he considered a German, and who together with Bishop D. G. Monrad, he blamed for the loss of South Jutland. This was almost an obsession with Lund, and Dania decided it might be better to cancel his membership. Lund resigned, however, before he was ousted, but his resignation stemmed from another incident which occurred during the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893.

During the Exposition, three trade commissioners from Denmark visited Chicago and were invited to a festive banquet in Dania. The affair ran smoothly until someone proposed a toast to King Christian IX. Lund reacted immediately: he stood up and violently protested the toast in no uncertain words. The banquet hall became a scene of pandemonium, with members and guests standing on the chairs and tables. During the fracas, the honored guests from Denmark slipped away, much to the embarrassment of Dania's officers. Afterwards, Lund was crestfallen and apologetic, and deeply regretful about his uncivil behavior: as a result, he resigned his Dania membership.

Another critic and crusader among Dania's members was Lauritz Olesen. Born on the island of Samsø, he learned his trade as a coachmaker in Aarhus. It was here that Olesen came under the influence of the new political movement known as socialism. He immigrated to America, and at the age of twenty, joined Dania on August 6, 1867.

Olesen never lost his interest in socialism, and he became one of the founders of the Scandinavian Social Democratic Sick Benefit Association, most of whose members were Danes. He also started "Arbejderen" ("The Worker"), as well as the Danish Worker's Singing Society. It's difficult to tell whether his main interest was singing or socialism, for he not only was a member of "Harmonien" but he founded and was president of the Danish Singer's Association of America. He unquestionably was the singing-est socialist in America at that time.

Lauritz Olesen's interests were thus not especially connected with Dania, but the Society recognized his contribution to the Chicago Danish colony and gave a banquet in his honor on his eightieth birthday, August 6, 1945.

Like Lauritz Olesen, Soren N. Nielsen was a member of Dania, yet had his main interests outside of the Society. Nielsen became a member on October 18, 1888, and served on a committee in 1890 to find a new home for Dania. In 1923, S. N. Nielsen was knighted by the King of Denmark, and Dania wanted to honor him with a banquet, but Nielsen declined the invitation and the banquet was cancelled. Being interested in young people, Nielsen frequently came to the anniversary banquets of the Danish Young People's Association, and to other outstanding affairs in Dania. When he passed away in October of 1948, nearly ninety one years in age, he was referred to as 'the grand old man of the Danish colony in Chicago', and was highly respected for his success as a builder, his work for the Danish Trinity Lutheran Church, and his support and interest in Grand View College in Des Moines, Iowa.

The interest which Soren N. Nielsen had in the Danish Church reflects another aspect of the Danish immigrant culture in America which is worth commenting on here. The immigrants from the cities and towns of Denmark, at the time of the great influx of Scandinavian immigrants, were mostly from homes which had little or no contact with the State Church of Denmark. The Church in Denmark leaned toward, "catered to" may be even more correct, the wealthy and privileged classes, and consequently the schism between believers and nonbelievers in Denmark was primarily the fault of the Church. Most of the immigrants that came to Chicago were artisans and craftsmen from those homes which were immune to the State Church. The farmers and peasants, generally a religious people, immigrated further onto the Great Plains and founded colonies and communities where the church was the center of all activities.

Many of the old, prominent Dania members were the artisans and craftsmen mentioned above, and were without any church affiliations, many even being confirmed atheists and free-thinkers. But they were, let us not forget, in America where the freedom to worship meant also the freedom not to worship if they so chose.

In order to dispell any notion that Dania is a churchless Society, it must be pointed out that many of Dania's fine members are also devout members of various churches.

In April, 1890, Chicago outbid all other American cities for the privilege of celebrating the 400th anniversary of Columbus's discovery of America in the "Windy City". Two delegates from Dania were chosen that year to the World's Columbian Exposition Committee, and Dania itself subscribed to ten World's Fair Bonds. In 1893 (Chicago couldn't quite make it in '92), Dr. Max Henius acted as one of the judges at the Fair, and several Danish honorary guests were feted in Dania. In June of that year the Chicago Danes celebrated the Danish Constitution Day by marching in a procession to the Fairgrounds, led by Charles L. Wilde.

The years from 1893 to 1900 were ones of depression in America. Riots, hunger marches and threats of revolution plagued the country. The devastating economic panics during this time naturally affected Dania. The last seven years of the 19th Century were cheerless and uneventful ones for the Society.

Louis Henius, Max Henius's younger brother, came to Chicago in 1892 and joined the Wahl-Henius Institute as an instructor. He became a member of Dania, and at one time served on the Board of Directors. He soon tired of life in America however, and returned to a literary career in Copenhagen where he became the owner of "Illustreret Tidende" ("Illustrated Times"), probably the most important Danish magazine of that time.

Jacob A. Riis, the Danish carpenter apprentice who became a renowned American social worker, was made an honorary member in Dania on February 17, 1904. In 1918 Dr. Max Henius formed the Jacob Riis League which represented some 25,000 Danish-Americans, and whose purpose it was to influence President Woodrow Wilson in favor of the Danish cause in Slesvig. In 1929, Dania contributed the largest donation (\$100.00) for the monument to Riis which was to stand in the Chicago park named for him. It was not until 1938 that this monument was unveiled in Riis Park at a ceremony poorly attended by the Chicago Danes. In 1949, a memorial festival was held in Riis Park to commemorate the 100th year anniversary of his birth.

The year 1908, when Emil Jorgensen was president, was a most important year in the history of Dania. It was in that year that the Danish National Committee was created in order to insure the perpetuation of the Danish Constitution celebrations. From that year on it was the Danish National Committee, not Dania that was the center of Danish cultural activities in Chicago. Even though Dania's delegates were present at the Danish National Committee's meetings, which were generally held in Dania, most of the new organization's activities took place outside of Dania.

The first president of the Danish National Committee was Dania member, "Little Claus" Jensen. In the Dania rota since 1903, Jensen was also active in the Danish Brotherhood, and was this society's vice-president when he passed away in 1928. Claus Jensen was a born leader, and was the proud possessor of the Knight's Cross of Dannebrog. A year after his passing, a monument to him was unveiled in Memorial Cemetery.

The banker, Jens C. Hansen, succeeded Jorgensen as president in 1909-10. The building on Chicago Avenue was sold for \$20,500.00, and a few months later it was decided to rent the Northwest Hall on Evergreen Avenue, Banker Steensland's former residence, for forty dollars a month, -light, heat, and janitor service included.